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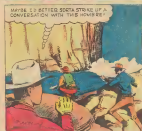
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GENE AUTRY

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TUCK GETS HIMSELF SHOT, AND HE'S OUT OF HIS HEAD—TALKING TOO MUCH! I TRIED TO GET HOLD OF HIM, BUT SOME COWBOYS NAMED AUTRY PULLED A GUN ON ME AND—

AUTRY! HA-M-HA! WONDER WHAT HE'S DOIN' HERE!



WELL, WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM LATER! IT'LL BE HARD TO GET TUCK OUT OF TOWN NOW! MAYBE THERE'S ANOTHER WAY!



A LITTLE LATER, BACK IN QUARTZ CITY.



MEANWHILE, BARLOW IS TELLING HIS STORY TO GENE AND SHERIFF AVERY AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE.

AND SO WE LEFT THIS MORNING AT THE DOC'S OFFICE! HIS RUMS HAVE DOUBLED ME, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR GENE HERE!

BARLOW, YOU SAID YOU AIMED TO TELL THE SHERIFF ABOUT THAT GOLD THAT'S WHAT'S BACK OF ALL YOUR TROUBLES!



I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, GENE! WELL, IT ALL STARTS AT SOUTHWESTERS BRIDGE! YOU KNOW IT RUNS THROUGH MY RANCH FOR A GOOD MANY MILES!



ABOUT A YEAR AGO I GOT CURIOUS ABOUT SOUTHWESTERS BRIDGE BEIN' SO DEEP! I THROWN A HEAVY LEAD WEIGHT ON THE END OF A LONG FISHING CORD INTO THE WATER, JUST THIRTYFEET FROM THE BRIDGE! WELL, TID IT'S DEEP! AN' THAT'S BECAUSE AN UNDERWATER CLIFF THERE!



BUT NOW INTERESTED IN WOLF WAS THE GOLD DUST. I RAN ON THE BOTTOM OF THE CANYON, WITHIN A MONTH, I'D REACHED THE CANYON AND FISHED UP A DOZEN GOLD NUGGETS WORTH OVER TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.



PEOPLE FOUND OUT ABOUT THOSE NUGGETS SOMEHOW. STRANGERS TRIED TO BUY MY RANCH THEN MY BARN WERE BURIED. MY STOCK WAS STAMPEDED OVER BOTTOMLESS RIVER GORGE ONE STORMY NIGHT, AND MY WELL WAS POISONED. IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE GOLD I BROUGHT IN ONE IN A WHILE, I'D HAVE LOST THE RANCH TO THE BANKS.



WHILE BROWN IS TELLING HIS STORY TO AUSTIN AND THE SHERIFF.



YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT THIS TROUBLE A LONG TIME AGO!

I COULDN'T HANDLE IT BUT I DECIDED I NEED HELP NOW! I SURE WOULD LIKE YOU AND AUSTIN TO SEE WHAT I'M PLANNING TO DO! WHY? I'LL DRAW A MAP OF THE RIVER!



HERE'S ABOUT THE WAY IT LOOKS.



IT'S RIGHT NEAR TO WOLF TANK ROCKS! THEY'RE A HUNDRED FEET HIGH. AN YOU CAN SEE 'EM FOR MILES! NOW I'VE GOT A PLAN TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF THE RIVER UPSTREAM-- WHY? HERE COMES SOMEONE!



OH HELLO BOB! MEET UP WITH A FRIEND. MY NAME'S GENE AUSTIN. YOU KNOW BROWN, HE'S HERE. GENE THIS IS DOC EMMER.

I HAD TO SHOW YOU AUSTIN! HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU! SAY BROWN! I GOT A BARGE IN FOR YOU! WHY BRING A DEAD MAN IN FOR ME TO FIND I DO MY BEST BUT I CAN'T BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE!



HE WASN'T DEAD WHEN WE BROUGHT HIM IN! HAD A 45 BLAZ THROUGH THE SHOULDER!

WELL THE 45 THROUGH THE SHOULDER DIDN'T HELP ANY! BUT THE THING THAT FINISHED HIM WAS THE KNIFE THROST THROUGH THE HEART!





THANKS, FLINT! I'LL GO SEE—OH WAIT A MINUTE!
FLINT? I WANT YOU TO KNOW, GENE AUTREY! THIS
HERE IS FLINT BATES, AUTREY!

GLAD TO KNOW YOU,
AUTREY!

LEON AND JOHN DE, FLINT! WE WERE JUST
HANGING! FOR A Y-DONE STEAK AT THE
BEPIN HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET! I'LL
BE BACK SOON AS I SEE IF THAT VARMINT
DO ANY MISCHIEF IN MY OFFICE!

A FEW MINUTES
LATER

ANYTHING
GONE?

HEAVY NOTION 'BUNCH
HE COULDA GOT!
GUESS YOU READED
HIM OFF, FLINT.
FORE HE COULDA
DO ANYTHING! SURE
DELICED TO YOU!

I WAS JUST TELLING AUTREY THERE'S TOO MUCH
VIOLENCE AROUND QUARTZ CITY LATELY
TO SUT WE! MAYBE YOU COULDA USE SOME
OF MY RANCH HANDS AS DEPUTIES!

THAT'D BE MIGHTY HELPFUL,
FLINT! I'LL THINK IT OVER!

I'D SURE LIKE TO SHOW YOU MY RANCH, AUTREY!
WHY DON'T ALL THREE OF YOU COME OUT FOR
CHOW TOMORROW MORN?

WELL, FINE! I'D LIKE TO 'SPEAKIN' FOR
MYSELF!

WE'LL BE THERE!

LATES THAT
NIGHT

LOOKS LIKE JUST A BLANK
SHEET OF PAPER TO ME!

LOOK AT IT CLOSE! YOU CAN SEE
GROOVES, "GHOST MARKS" PRESSED
INTO THE PAPER! A MAP WAS
DRAWN WITH A HARD
PENCIL ON ANOTHER
SHEET ON TOP OF
THIS ONE!

WHEN I SO OVER THE MARKS WITH INK, A MAP
APPEARS, OBVIOUSLY BOTTOMLESS SAND WAS
WELL SAND ROCKS! IT'S ON BARTLOW'S
RANCH!

I GOTTA HAND IT TO YA,
THAT'S USIN' YOUR HEAD, BUT
IT STILL DON'T TELL US
WHERE THE GOLD IS! I'VE
BEEN OVER THAT SPOT
A HUNDRED TIMES!

THE NEXT TIME BARTLOW HEADS
FOR HIS GOLD MINE, WE'LL GO
GUARD TO BOTTOMLESS RIVER.
HOLD UP THERE AN WATCH!
BARTLOW'LL SHOW US WHERE
THE GOLD IS! AUTREY AND THE
SHEPHE' WON'T BE THERE—
I HAVE OTHER PLANS
FOR THEM!

THE NEXT DAY, BARLOW LEADS AUBRY AND THE SHERIFF OVER A SECRET SHORT CUT OUT TO FLINT SNEED'S BAD RANCH.

THIS SHORT CUT IS NEW TO ME!

IT'S COMMON SENSE TO SNEED'S RANCH TODAY! I'M AFRAID!

THAT SHOWS ANOTHER ONE BACK OF THESE TREES.

LET'S SEE WHAT ALL THE COMMISSION IS! OLIVE CHAND!

BETTER LEAVE IN HORSES HERE!



NOW WHAT TH' DICKENS! THAT'S FLINT SNEED!



GOOD-GOSH, AUNTIE!



GUESS THE GUY—

SH-E-R-K! WAIT A MINUTE!



THAT'S SHOOTIN'! BOTH HANDS TOO!

KEEP QUIET AND C'MON!



WHAT'S THE GUY AUNTIE? I WAS JUST GETTING READY TO CALL OUT! GOOD-GOSH! I DON'T KNOW FLINT SNEED COULD HANDLE A SIX-GUN LIKE THAT!

THAT'S JUST IT! NOBODY WAS SUPPOSED TO SEE THAT SHOOTIN'! I DON'T SAUVY! DECIDON WE'D BETTER NOT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT IT JUST YET!



WE'VE BITTEN LIT BACK AN GO TH' REGULAR
TRAIL!



WHAT DO YOU KNOW
ABOUT SPEED?



HE'S A STRANGE ONE! MOODY
REALLY KNOWS ANYTHING
ABOUT FLINT SHEED! CAME
HERE ABOUT FIVE YEARS
AGO! MUST BE HAD PLENTY
OF MONEY! BOUGHT THIS BIG
RANCH AN NOW HE CONTROLS
TH QUARTZ CITY BANK! HERE'S
THE PLACE WE'RE COMIN' TO!

LATER ON

PITCH IN ROW! BY TH WAY HOW ABOUT
SOME HUNTING TOMORROW WITH ME
AND SOME O TH HANDS? I NEVER
HANDLE GUNS, BUT I'M GOIN ALONG
FOR THE RIDE!



I'D SURE LIKE TO FLINT BUT AUNTAY
THE SHERIFF AND ME WERE JAMIN
TO GET OFF EARLY TOMORROW
MORNIN' ON A LITTLE JAUNT ON
MY BRANCH!

AFTER LUNCH

I'VE GOT SOME OF THE
FINEST HORSES IN THE
COUNTRY HERE—WHAT'S THE TROUBLE,
AUNTAY?

JUST A FIST FIGHT GOIN ON NEAR
TH CORRAL! THAT BIRD'S PRETTY
BIG TO BE KNOCKIN THAT LITTLE
GUY AROUND LIKE THAT!



THAT'S BAST! LEARNLESS BEATING UP THAT YOUNG
NORTON KID! HE LL KILL THAT BOY!



NO USE ASKIN TH KID FOR LIFE MASTERS!



PRETTY FANCY WITH THAT GUN AIN'T YA' AUTEY? I'LL CATCH YOU WITHOUT IF ONE OF THEM SAYS!

BART: YOU'VE MADE TROUBLE ONCE TOO OFTEN! NOW GET OFF THIS RANCH AND STAY OFF!



LAWLESS IS A DOUGH CUSTOMER, AUTEY! HE'S HALF KILLED SEVERAL OF MY MEN WITH HIS RIFLE! WATCH OUT FOR HIM!

HE SURE CLEARED OUT FAST WHEN YOU SPOKE UP PLINT!



RECKON WE'D BETTER BE GETTIN' BACK TO TOWN, PLINT! I'LL RIDE BACK WITH YOU, IF YOU DON'T MIND! I'VE GOT TO TAKE SOME MONEY INTO TOWN—JUST SOLD FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS' WORTH OF STEERS IN KANSAS CITY!



A LITTLE LATER (THIS IS MIGHTY WILD COUNTRY IN THIS SECTION!)

THAT'S WHY I DON'T LIKE TO KEEP THIS MUCH MONEY AROUND THE RANCH! SEVERAL MEN HAVE BEEN KILLED ALONG HERE IN HOLDUPS!



STICK 'EM UP AN' HAND OVER THAT MONEY!



HE'S DONE NOW! LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THOSE TOWNS THAT'VE BEEN HANGIN' AROUND 'N SOLD DOLLAR SALOON LATELY!

AUTEY: YOU SURE DO ME A GOOD TURN AND HAVE GOTTEN ALL THE MONEY IF YOU HADN'T KILLED HIM!





TWO DARK-MANED HORSEBOYS WATCH FROM CONCEALMENT AS AUTOY AND THE CHERRING AND THE BASTYLY DISGUISED HORSEBOYS DISE.

TH BOYS WILL LEAD TH SHERIFF AND AUTOY THROUGH OLD DARK CANYON AN TRAP EM ON THAT NARROW CLIFF TRAIL!
SWE GOT FIVE MEN WITH RIFLES WAITIN' FOR EM THERE!



HE RECALLED JUST AFTER DARK-DEER THE TWO HORSEBOYS WERE GOING OFF TO THE TOWN OF BOTTOMLESS ROCKS.

I TOLD YOU I WANTED TO KILL THAT AUTOY MYSELF!

LAWLESS, YOU'RE TALKIN' A DROPPED FROM ME NOW, BOY! HERE'S BOTTOMLESS ROCKS! WE'LL GET HIM IN THERE! BOY, DEER!



THIS SURE BEATS TRYIN' TO TRAP THAT SUPPERY SON OF A SALAMANDER!

HERE COMES BRAWLOW NOW! KEEP DOWN!



THOSE DARK-DEER, LIKE BLAST HE POWDER! HE'S GOT FUSE TOO!

WE CAN FOLLOW HIM ON FOOT! HE AINT GOT NO HORSE WITHOUT HIS HORSE!



GOOGONE! I STIPPED IN AN LOST MY SUN-SUN TOO! WELL IF I CAN JUST KEEP THE STUFF GOY—



I'M PUTTIN' A LOT OF POWDER IN THESE HOLES! HOPE THIS GOOD DARK WILL GIVE WAY LIKE I WANT IT TO!



ALL TANNED AN BRADY AN I MORE I PROOFED RIGHT ON TH LENGTH OF THESE FUSES! I GOTTA GOOS THAT DIVERED MIGHTY PROOF!



I WISH I'D MADE ALL THOSE PILES
TEN FEET LONGER!



IF I CAN JUST GET BACK OF THAT
OVERHANGING ROCK!



THAT DID IT! THE DAMED
BANKS GONE!



WELL, I'LL BE A LOP-EARED HORNED TOAD! HE'S
CHANGED TH' COURSE OF TH' RIVER!

I BEGIN TO SEE TH' ANSWER
TO ALL THIS!



BARLOW'S GOING DOWNSTREAM
AGAIN TOWARD THE END OF WHERE
TH' DAMS USED TO BE! C'MON!



LOOK AT THAT DITCH, HUNDREDS
OF FEET DEEP!

AT TH' TOP OF TH' CLIFF, LAWLESS!
LOOK, MAN! YELLOW GOLD IN
VEINS AS THICK AS YOUR
FINGERS!



TH' LOSTER LOST! TH' GOLD I FOUND
BEATS TH' CUFF MUSTA BEEN
BOOBING OFF THAT LEDGE FOR
A MILLION YEARS!



NOW WE KNOW WHERE TH' GOLD IS,
BARLOW'S IN OUR WAY! MIGHT AS WELL
PUT A SLUG THROUGH HIM!



MEANWHILE— NOT LONG AFTER DAWN
AUSTY AND THE SHERIFF ARE FOLLOWING
HOT ON THE TRAIL OF THE OUTLAWS WHO
ROBBED SNEED'S BANK

HEY! WE'VE LEFT TH' REST OF
OUR HORSE BEHIND! MAYBE WE
OUGHT TO SLOW DOWN!



WE GOT TO
ANYHOW! WE'RE COMIN'
TO TH' OLD BACK
CANYON ROAD!
ONLY DOOM FOR
OUR HORSES AT
A TWIG UP ON
TH' SIDE OF THAT
CANYON
WALL!

I DON'T LIKE TH' LOOKS
OF THIS TRAIL! THIS IS
A DEVIL-GULCHER'S
HEAVEN!



WOW! WE GOT OURSELVES
SNACK INTO A TRAP!

WHOW! STEADY CHAMP! BACK YOUR
HORSE AROUND THAT CORNER,
SHERIFF! THAT LEDGE MAY
PROTECT US FOR A MINUTE!



THAT HOMBRE'LL CIRCLE AROUND UNTIL
WE'RE IN PLAIN SIGHT AGAIN!

TH' TRAIL WAS A GOOD BIT
WIDER A LITTLE WAY BACK
WHERE TH' WALL ARCHED
OVER! BACK UP TO IT!



WATCH IT SHERIFF!









LAWLESS! YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS—BUT—AND SHEDDIE AHEAD! WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!

I WISH AUTOY WAS HERE BUT NO SUCH LUCK! THEY'RE BOTH DEAD BY NOW!

AND AS FOR YOU—A MAN WOULDN'T LIVE TO TELL HE FELL FIVE HUNDRED FEET ONTO THOSE ROCKS AT THE BOTTOM OF THAT CLIFF. WOULD HE, BARLOW?



BACK UP BARLOW OR YOU'LL GET A STOMACH FULLA LEAD!



MEANWHILE, AUTOY HAS WOUNDED ONE AND GOT RUN THE LAST OF THE MARRIED OUTLAWS WHO WERE PURSUING HIM

HOW WOULD THAT BE!



I'D BETTER PULL OFF TH TRAIL AN LET HIM GO BY!



PLINT SHEDDIE! I'LL SEE HIM LATER! RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT TO FIND BARLOW!



C'MON, CHAMP, WE'VE GOTTA HURRY! I HOPE WE'RE NOT TOO LATE!



THIS OUGHT TO BE THE PLACE, ACCORDING TO THE MAD BARLOW DREW! THERE'S TH WOLF CAME ROCKS AN BARLOW'S HORSE!











I BELIEVE THIS HOMBRE'S HARKENIN
TO TACK MY HIDE TO THE BARN DOOR!



HERE GOES HIS TEETH AN' MAYBE SOME OF
MY KNIFER'S TOO!



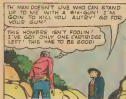
HE'S GOT ME BACKED UP TOO CLOSE TO
THE EDGE OF TH'S CLIFF



WATCH THAT
CLIFF EDGE!



WRA-EEEEEE!



GENE FOR A FEW SECONDS I WAS AFRAID THAT ICE-COLD HORROR WAS GONNA BE IN THE END OF YOU! I'M IN A COLD SWEAT!

HE'S THE DEADLIEST KILLER I EVER MET! LOOKS LIKE THE BULLET REALIZED HIS RIGHT ARM! THAT'S WHY HE JUST SHOT ONCE!



YOU'LL GET OVER IT SHERIFF! IT'S TOO BAD A BEAUTY MAN LIKE YOU HAS TO GET ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW!

THERE'S SOMEONE COMING



WHERE'S THE DING-DANG RIVER BONE? AUTEY! BADLOW! I THOUGHT YOU WERE DONE FOR!



GOT A PRISONER FOR YOU HERE SHERIFF! HE COULD HAVE BEEN A BIG MAN IF HE'D BONE STRAIGHT!

PLUMB TOOK HIS SHOT AWAY WHEN AUTEY OUTRAN HIM!



I'D FIGGERED BART LAWLESS WAS IN ON THIS! WHERE'S HE?

ON THE ROCKS FIVE HUNDRED FEET BELOW THAT LEDGE! YOU HAD OUGHT BEEN THAT SCARED! JARTED AUTEY HAD HIM WHIPPED. HE DIVED FOR GEMS WITH A KNIFE AN' WENT OVER THE CLIFF SHERIFF!



SURE-FF! THERE'S WHAT'S BEHIND ALL THESE SHENANIGANS! BADLOW'S GOLD STUFF!

GOOD BONE BADLOW! THERE'S BARRELS OF IT! IT'S JUST GOLD GOLD AN' IT!



IT'S THE REAL STUFF, SHERIFF! A MILLION DOLLARS WORTH AN' MORE BELOW THE CLIFF! I'M GONNA DIVIDE THIS VALLED STUFF UP WITH YOU AN' THE SHERIFF, GENE! YOU SAVED MY HIDE!



THANKS BADLOW! BUT I NEVER HANKERED TO HAVE TOO MUCH GOLD IN MY POCKETS! AFRAID I MIGHT GET TO COLLECTIN' IT! YOU CAN BUY ME THAT NEW HAT THOUGH BEFORE I PUSH ON! THIS A LIES TWO

HOLES IN IT NOW AN' IT'S GETTIN' KINDA DRAFTY!





The door closed behind the guard Mace Dillon and the warden were alone in the office. For several moments, there was no sound except the tick-tock of the wall clock and the buzzing of a bluebottle fly against one of the windows.

Finally, the warden spoke. "In a few minutes, Dillon, you'll walk out of this prison and be a free man again. I wish I could be sure you'd also be a GOOD man but—"

"Stow the preachin', Warden," interrupted Mace. "Or does that go with the cash on' the suit o' clothes the territory gives me?"

The warden shook his head. "No. I'm forced, under the law, to give you those. My remarks are purely voluntary."

"Then you might as well save yore breath."

"I will," said the warden, "after I say one more thing. In all my years as warden of this prison, I've never been so reluctant to turn a man loose."

A sneer curled Mace's thin cruel lips. "You couldn't o' said nothin' nicer, Warden. I've been a mile worried I'd gotten soft these past five years."

The warden reached out to tap the little bell on the desk, but held his finger poised above it as he said, "You'd BETTER get soft, Dillon, where Ira Gridley's concerned. If anything happens to him—"

"It's sure as blazes goin' to!" Mace's voice was thick with hate.

"Then I reckon I'll be seeing you again," said the warden, "to hang you."

Mace laughed. But there was no mirth in the sound. Only the bitterness of a man who lives outside the law and hates all those who live within it.

The warden let his finger tap the bell. Almost immediately, the office door opened to admit the guard.

The warden shoved five silver dollars across the desk. "There's your cash, Dillon. Get going!"

Mace scooped up the coins and jingled them in his hand a moment, before sliding them into his pocket. Then he looked squarely into the warden's face. "You'll never hang me for Ira Gridley's killin', Warden, because when that ornery polecat gets his, I'm gonna have an alibi NOBODY can break."

Two months later, Mace was sitting on the steps of a cabin halfway up the west side of a rugged, narrow Shirt-tail Canyon. He was wearing a bright red shirt and cleaning his six-gun. Every morning for the past four weeks, from sunup to noon, he had sat on these steps—in plain view of the cabin directly across the ravine. Right where the old woman who lived alone in that cabin could see him AND his red shirt. He did not know the old woman, not even her name. Nor did he know what she looked like. The canyon walls were a good six hundred feet apart at this point, too far to distinguish anybody's features. A bright red shirt was different. In the clear mountain air, it could be seen for a good quarter of a mile. She could not fail to note his presence there, and it being such a lonely spot, she would undoubtedly look to see if he

was there each day.

He glanced across at the other cabin. As usual, the old woman was on the porch. He guessed she was sitting in a rocking-chair because, now and then, there was movement to her figure. He guessed, too, that she knitted while she rocked. The tiny flashes of light he sometimes saw were the kind of flash steel knitting needles would make if the sun caught them.

The sun was riding the top of the sky now. Mace loaded the six-gun and holstered it. His alibi was perfect. Tomorrow morning, Ira Gridley—the man who had sent him to prison—would die!

The morning dawned cool and clear. Mace ate a hurried breakfast and then went to the small barn in back of his cabin. As he saddled his horse, he was thinking. It would take him a half-hour to ride to the rim overlooking the trail that Gridley traveled each week and from town to be with his family. By riding over the back trail to the rim, he would not likely meet anyone . . . With his rifle ready in its sheath at the right side of his saddle, he mounted his horse and set off.

When Sheriff Reed and his two deputies dismounted in front of the cabin the next noon, Mace walked out to meet them.

"Howdy, fellas," he grinned. "I heard yore hosses comin' up the trail so I put a pot o' coffee on the fire. It'll be ready for drinkin' in a couple minutes."

"We don't want coffee, Dillon," said the sheriff. "We want you—for murder!"

Mace's grin faded a little. "What're you talkin' about?"

"Ira Gridley was gunned down this mornin'! We're sure you did it."

"This mornin'?" Mace let his grin come back in full force. "I wasn't affa these porch steps this mornin', Sheriff. Fact is, I've been sittin' here every day from sunup to noon since I come here to live. Seems like I can't get enough sun after bein' shut away from it for five years."

Sheriff Reed's face was stern. "It's no use, Dillon. We've got you dead to

rights. We've got a witness who saw you runnin' away from the scene o' the crime—right after the shot!"

"That's loco!" cried Mace, beginning to feel a bit uneasy. "I can PROVE I was here! The old woman who lives in that cabin over there—" he pointed across the canyon—"will bear me out. She MUSTA seen me sittin' here in this red shirt."

The sheriff smiled, somewhat grimly. "What did you do, Dillon? Rig up a dummy in a red shirt to sit out here while you were off killin' Gridley?"

Mace lowered his eyes so the sheriff would not see the fear in them. That was exactly what he had done. He had planned it since the day he had come to live in this cabin and noticed the old woman across the way. He looked back at the sheriff. "You're barkin' up the wrong tree, Sheriff. That old woman—"

"Her name's Annie Jenkins," the sheriff interrupted, "an' she can't help you, Dillon." He moved forward, a pair of handcuffs dangling from his hand.

"Why not?" Mace yelled. "She saw me—"

"Unh-unh," said the sheriff. "She didn't. You see, Dillon, Annie's goin' blind. She can't see a durned thing more'n five feet away!"



CHEETWAH'S Treasure



THEY WERE A PEACEFUL PEOPLE
HERDERS AND HUNTERS FOR THE
MOST PART.



SOME OF 'EM WERE MIGHTY GOOD
METAL SMITHS, TOO, MAKIN' TINKERS
OUTA GOLD AND SILVER THEY FOUND
IN THEIR MOUNTAIN LAND.



THEN ONE DAY A GROUP OF SPANIARDS
CROSSED THE DESERT PASS NEAR
CHESTWAIN'S VILLAGE.



ONE OF CHESTWAIN'S SCOUTS SPOTTED
'EM AND LET OUT FOR THE TRIBAL
VILLAGE.



DALEFACES COME
ON, CHESTWAIN!
BE NO MORE
SCOUTS! WE'RE
COATS AND HEAD
DRESSERS NOW,
SHINING THEM
TILL THEY SHINE!

WE WILL GO
TO MEET
THEM! WE
WILL! SO
THEY WELCOME!

SO CHESTWAIN AND HIS WARRIORS RODE
OUT TO MEET THE SPANIARDS.



WHY HAVE YOU COME
TO CHESTWAIN'S LAND
ON GREAT LEADER
OF THE DALEFACES?

WE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR GOLD
AND SILVER, CHESTWAIN! WE
HAVE COME FOR
IT IN THE NAME
OF OUR KING!

THAT MADE CHESTWAIN PLENTY MAD! WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, HE AND HIS BRAVES RODE AWAY!

WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW, CAPTAIN? FIRE UPON THEM?

THEN WE SHOULD NEVER LEARN THE SECRET OF THEIR MINDS! WE WILL RIDE TO HONDER HILL AND ESTABLISH A SETTLEMENT AND WAIT!

A FEW WEEKS LATER, A COUPLE JESUIT MISSIONARIES, CALLED PADRE TOMASO AND PADRE LUIS, SHOWED UP AT THE SPANISH CAMP.

BUENOS DIAS, PADRES!

AND TO YOU MY SON! I AM PADRE TOMASO! BY PERMISSION OF HIS MAJESTY BROTHER LUIS AND I COME TO FOUND A CHURCH HERE!

WITH THE HELP OF THE INDIANS THEY'D BROUGHT WITH THEM, PADRES BUILT THE CHURCH.

THEN, ONE DAY, WHILE PADRE TOMASO WAS WALKING IN THE MOUNTAINS ABOVE THE SETTLEMENT, HE MADE AN AMAZING DISCOVERY!

SANTA MARIA! A VEN OF PURE GOLD!

CURIOUS OF A PIECE OF THE BOOK, HE WENT BACK TO THE CHURCH TO TELL PADRE LUIS ABOUT HIS FIND.

SHOULD WE NOT CONCEAL THIS FROM EL CAPITAN BROTHER TOMASO? AND KEEP THE GOLD FOR THE CHURCH?

"BUT IT WAS TOO LATE TO KEEP TH' NEWS A SECRET!"

SHAME UPON YOU, PADRES!
ALL THE RICHES OF NEW SPAIN
BELONG TO OUR MOST GRACIOUS
KING! WHERE DID YOU FIND
THAT GOLD?

SO BE IT! COME,
CAPTAIN! I WILL
SHOW YOU!



"SO PADRE TOMASO LED TH' CAPTAIN
AN' HIS MEN UP TH' MOUNTAIN



"BUT WHEN THEY GOT NEAR TH' ROCKY LEDGE "

PADRE MIA! WE
ARE SURROUNDED!

AND YOU WILL DIE UNLESS
YOU TURN BACK! THE GOLD
OF THESE MOUNTAINS
BELONGS TO MY PEOPLE!
YOU SHALL NOT HAVE IT!



"Havin' NO CHOICE, TH' SPANIARDS
WENT BACK DOWN TH' MOUNTAIN
NOT KNOWIN' ONE O' CHESTWAX'S
BRAVES WAS FOLLOWIN' 'EM "

SO CHESTWAX BELIEVES
HE IS GREATER THAN
SPAIN! I WILL BRING IN
AN ARMY AND CONQUER
THESE SAVAGES!



"HURRYIN' BACK TO CHESTWAX, TH'
BRAVE REPEATED WHAT TH'
CAPTAIN HAD SAID "

THE DALEFACES ARE
WRONG! WE WILL
CONQUER THEM!



"THAT NIGHT CHEETWAX CLIMBED TO
TH' TOP OF TH' GREAT MOUNTAIN



"AN' SO TH' LEGEND GOES, CALLED ON
TH' INJUN SPIRIT WORLD FOR HELP
AGAINST TH' ENEMY"



"AT SUNUP TH' NEXT MORNIN'
CHEETWAX'S BRAVES ATTACKED!



"TH' SPANIARDS PUT UP A GREAT
FIGHT, BUT THEY WERE OUT-
NUMBERED ONE TO ONE!"



"WHEN SUNDOWN CAME, THERE
WASNT A SPANIARD LEFT ALIVE
IN THIS SETTLEMENT!"



"T'WAS MIGHTY PECULIAR, BUT, THAT
SAME DAY, ALL TH' OTHER SOUTHWEST
INJUN TRIBES ROSE AGAINST TH'
WHITE MEN"



"ONLY A HANDFUL MANAGED TO ESCAPE
BACK ACROSS TH' RIO GRANDE."



"CHESTWAH AN' HIS PEOPLE LEFT
THEIR VILLAGE AN' HEADED UP
INTO TH' HILLS! NOBODY'S EVER
SEEN ANY OF 'EM SINCE!"



"WE WILL GUARD OUR
RICHES FOREVER!
THE WHITE MAN SHALL
NEVER FIND
THEM!"

"AN' NOBODY EVER HAS!
BUT YOU CAN SEE CHESTWAH
IF YOU LOOK AT TH' TALLEST
PEAK O' MOUNT FRANKLIN!
IT'S TH' SPITTIN' IMAGE
OF A INDIAN CHIEF!"



"FOLKS SAY HE'S
KEEPIN' GUARD
OVER TH' GOLD
AN' SILVER OF
HIS PEOPLE!"

"IS THAT A
REALLY TRUE
STORY,
PAPAHANDLE
DETE?"



"WEL, CHESTWAH WAS A REAL
CHIEF, JANBY! AN' I'VE SEEN
THAT PEAK MYSELF! AN' I'LL
GIVE ODDS TH' GOLD AN'
SILVER'S STILL UP THERE!"



"BUT FOR ALL O ME, THERE ITS
GONNA STAY! I AIN'T EXACTLY
SUPERSTITIOUS, BUT I DON'T
BELIEVE IN TAKIN'
CHANCES!"





